Meeting Summary

Background

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) invited County residents to provide public comments on the draft Countywide Coordinated Implementation Strategy (Strategy). The draft Strategy combines seven individual watershed implementation plans into one coordinated implementation strategy. The Strategy must identify how the County will meet National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit requirements. The County's MS4 Permit area includes approximately two thirds of the total impervious surface area in Montgomery County.

Notice of the meeting was published through the local Gazette newspaper as required by the Maryland Department of the Environment, through a press release by the County Public Information Office, shared on the Montgomery County Facebook page, at the Community Clean Water Summit, and through various community and environmental interest group's list serves. Thirteen residents attended the meeting; three of them provided formal, oral comments.

The meeting agenda is included as Attachment 1.

The meeting agenda, presentations, and summary can be found at:
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/StormwaterPermit/

Introduction

Robin Roberts, the meeting facilitator from RESOLVE, welcomed agency representatives and County residents before moving on to review the meeting's purpose: to collect public comment on the Strategy. Attendees were encouraged to sign in, place a pushpin onto a map of County watersheds to identify which watershed they live in, and sign up for public comment during the public comment session.

Meosotis Curtis, Manager, Watershed Planning and Monitoring, DEP, welcomed the residents and thanked them for attending. She also encouraged them to submit formal public comments verbally during the public comment session, or via email to MS4permitplans@montgomerycountymd.gov. Additional information on how to submit public comments is included at the end of this summary.

Ms. Curtis then provided a presentation on watershed issues in the County (e.g., illegal dumping, flow control, pollutant loads, and trash) and how they are addressed by the draft Strategy.

Technical Presentation

Ted Brown and Nick Lindow, Water Resource Engineers at Biohabitats (lead consultant), presented technical information about the draft strategy. Their presentation included overviews of the analytical approach used to draft the strategy, restoration potential within the county, watershed treatment strategies, and modeling approaches. The complete presentation is available online at http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/StormwaterPermit/

Following the technical presentation, members of the public posed several questions. In response, County and technical staff made the following points:

- The modeling approaches do not account for growth. There is very little County land available for greenfield development. In addition, County regulations requiring modern stormwater technologies for new and redeveloped properties will likely result in a net reduction in pollution and flow for the watershed.

- Technical staff have prioritized environmental site design (ESD) and low impact development (LID) projects along with previously identified restoration sites to meet the impervious cover treatment target of the MS4 permit. Riparian reforestation was not as cost effective as the other proposed treatment practices, and was therefore not a focus in the first permit cycle analysis. ESD and LID practices are accepted by the Maryland Department of the Environment and have better pollutant removal capabilities than most traditional structural controls.

- Anacostia is the only watershed with a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for trash, which was promulgated in 2010. While other county watersheds do not have trash TMDLs, Montgomery County is committed to targets set forth in the Trash Free Potomac Treaty. The treaty has an evaluation benchmark in 2013.

- Interagency coordination and coordination between public and private landowners are integral components of successful plan implementation.

Open House Session

Following the presentations, meeting participants circulated around the room, reviewing and discussing individual watershed implementation plans with County and technical staff. During the open house session, staff identified several discussion themes including:

- plan funding;
- metrics for evaluating plan success;
- private and public project sites; and
- outreach and education.

Public Comment

Three members of the public submitted verbal public comments during this session. During their public comments, the following points were made:

- How will municipalities that are excluded from the Draft Countywide Coordinated Implementation Strategy (such as the City of Gaithersburg) fit into the overall plan?
- How tightly is the Strategy tied to Master Plans (e.g., plans developed by Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission or the City of Gaithersburg)? Development will have additional impacts such as traffic that could pollute the watershed.
- County staff should give careful consideration to ensure public and private cooperation in the strategy implementation.
- Montgomery County communities could benefit from a County initiative to collect information about community success stories that could be shared with other communities. The County should consider recognizing communities that make exceptional efforts to meet MS4 Permit regulatory requirements. This approach may incentivize more communities to proactively address watershed concerns.
- The County's ESD site design criteria should adequately protect stream health.
- Continued monitoring is important. The County could provide tools to allow citizens and their communities to identify problem areas early on in the growth of their communities.

A transcription of public comments is included as Attachment 2.

Closing Remarks

Ms. Curtis concluded the meeting, stating that the County is completing an inventory of public and private property to provide additional specific projects for implementation. To this end, the County is seeking partnerships between public entities and private property owners. She mentioned the RainScapes Rewards program, which provides a rebate to

private property owners who voluntarily implement various watershed management techniques. She thanked the participants for attending and contributing their valuable public comments to the Draft Countywide Coordinated Strategy.

Submitting Public Comments

All comments must be submitted by 5pm on Friday, March 25 2011.

Note: In response to a request from the Stormwater Partners, DEP subsequently extended the comment deadline to Friday, April 8, 2011.

Public Comments can be submitted:
- Via email at: MS4permitplans@montgomerycountymd.gov
- Via mail to the attention of Meo Curtis, DEP, 255 Rockville Pike, Suite 120. Rockville MD 20850

Additional Information

Countywide Coordinated Implementation Strategy:
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/dep/downloads/Countywide_CIS_Draft_Combined_021611.pdf

For individual watershed plans, go to the link below and then click on the watershed of interest:
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dectmpl.asp?url=/content/dep/water/wris.asp#plans

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2 – Public Comment Transcripts

Attachment 1 – Meeting Agenda

Montgomery County Department of the Environment
Coordinated Countywide Implementation Strategy
Public Meeting
Rockville Library
March 10, 2011; 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Agenda

Goals of the Meeting:
- **To gain a deeper understanding of the county wide strategy for watershed restoration;**
- **To gain a deeper understanding of the individual watershed restoration plans; and**
- **To provide public comments on both.**

6:00 – 6:05	**Welcome, Background, Agenda Review** • Welcome participants • Review agenda	MCDEP Biohabitats RESOLVE
6:05 – 6:35	**Presentation: Overview of the Draft Countywide Coordinated Strategy for Watershed Restoration and the individual watershed restoration plans**	Biohabitats
6:35 – 7:20	**Informal Small Group Discussions**	All
7:20 – 7:30	**Break**	
7:30 – 7:45	**Report Out on Small Group Discussions** • No comments will be taken at this time, clarification questions only.	Biohabitats
7:45 – 8:55	**Formal Public Comment** • Citizens submit comments in writing or read comments into the record.	Citizens
8:55 – 9:00	**Meeting Evaluation** • Please visit http://is.gd/zBDdIz to complete a meeting evaluation form, or complete a hardcopy evaluation forms for submission here or by mail.	Citizens

9:00	Adjourn	All

Attachment 2 – Public Comment Transcripts (3)

1. Richard D Wilder; 9969 Lake Landing Road, Montgomery Village, MD 20886.

Due to a recording device malfunction, the transcript for Richard D. Wilder is not verbatim. The content in the transcript has been captured from multiple sets of notes, and RESOLVE believes the final product to be accurate.

I live in Montgomery Village, which has small letters on the map. It is a pretty good-sized place and a lot bigger than Laytonsville and other places that do have big letters on the map. We would like to get a little bit more respect. I talked to Doug Marshall and got a lot of information from him on the retrofits that are getting done in this program.

A couple concerns I have was how does the city of Gaithersburg and other municipalities fit into this plan? This was mentioned before, but not this time. How does land use in the future master plan affect this plan? Right now, the Gaithersburg master plan is split into two parts – east and west. The east part was delayed because of M83 and Science City - a highway we hope does not get built up to Clarksburg and Germantown. Trying to fight that because of a lot of environmental damage. The highway crosses the Seneca River and hits some Special Protection Areas up in Wildcat Branch and places up in that area.

Anyhow, the question is how tightly is this program tied in with the master plan process? Lots of development plan for this Science City. Lots of concern about traffic and everything else, how it will impact the watershed and everything else. Those are my major concerns. I am concerned about these municipalities that seem to love development, but don't like green space. Are we paying for what they are doing, or are they paying the load on this? These were not planned comments, but those are my concerns.

2) Scott Davies; 5613 Sugarbush Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

I am in the Rock Creek watershed area. The first thing I would like to do is publically thank some members of the County. Dan Harper and Don Dorsey have been very helpful in working with me as a president of the Homeowners Association. They spend a lot of time in our community, and I really do appreciate their efforts.

I want to elaborate a little bit on that. I think it is going to take a large amount of public and private cooperation to achieve these objectives. To the extent that we can somehow link ourselves together through different types of programs, I think that is going to become very important. I would like to also suggest that the County could potentially become an organization that could hold information that might be applicable to other members. So, for example Timberlawn Homeowners Association, is the association I represent as the president. We have done some things that I think other communities might be able to benefit from and I am sure that a lot of other communities have done some other things, outreach within their communities, that may be valuable to us. And I would like to propose or suggest that the County put themselves in a position to gather those types of information and make them available on a request type basis.

In addition to that, I think it is always better to, instead of using a stick to get folks to do things, to use some type of a value system. I suggested this in our last meeting and I would like to officially suggest it as well here. And that is that to the extent that we can take these different watershed areas and break them down to a little more of a community level I think the accountability is going to be in a position where it is going to make those of us that have the responsibility of a community be able to see and understand progress as it is being made. So, I would suggest that we break it down to a community level and that we do some testing or analysis in those areas. And to the extent that the community is hitting their objectives, which should be a subset of the total watershed, that you put up some type of a, for lack of better terms, gold star program. So that a community can be identified as achieving an MS4 gold star status, based on the obtainment of some of these measures either early or on time.

And lastly, I would just like to thank you for this time to get to talk to you.

3) Paul Hlavinka, 19 Turnham Lane, Gaithersburg, MD 20878.

I am in the Muddy Branch Watershed. And I would like to echo the thanks to DEP for pulling together I think a very excellent Watershed Implementation Plan. I think this plan is going to be a very valuable tool, at a very critical time. I am very proud that my little watershed has no TMDLs, I hope over time that does not change. My concern is the growth assumption within the model that does assume that ESDs, these site design criteria, are going to be adequate to protect stream health. So I do want to make sure that we continue to monitor, and I guess as a community that we have the tools to monitor and report stream health. And also that we can, as citizens, raise flags and alert the County so that if there are infractions or concerns with performance of a facility as these communities grow, that we can raise a flag and those can get addressed. Those are my only comments, thank you.